



8

JUNE 95

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# STARMAN



ROBINSON  
HARRIS  
VON GRAWBADER

HARRIS 95



ANGER BRED  
MY EARLIER  
WORDS.

"THEY'LL WISH  
THEY NEVER  
MET ME."

YEAH,  
RIGHT.

I'M GOING TO ATTACK  
THE CIRCUS, FLYING IN  
A-WHOOPIN' AND A-  
HOLLERIN'.

YEAH.

RIGHT.

FOR A MOMENT THERE,  
I THOUGHT LIKE A HERO.  
A BIG, TOUGH, TWO-  
FISTED, BRIGHTLY-  
COSTUMED HERO.

AND THEN I  
GLANCED AT  
MYSELF IN  
THE MIRROR.

AND REMEMBERED  
I WASN'T, AND THAT I  
DIDN'T HAVE A CLUE  
WHAT I WAS GOING TO  
DO ABOUT THE CIRCUS  
...AND ITS FREAKS... AND  
BLISS, ITS OWNER.

AND EVEN NOW, AS I  
CREEP THROUGH  
CANVAS AND SHADOW  
AND HAY...

# A (K) NIGHT AT THE CIRCUS II

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HE'S  
WAKING...

...I THINK.

SAW...

... SAW HIS  
EYELIDS...

...FLUTTER.

JACK  
KNIGHT.

HOW  
DO YOU  
FEEL?

WHOA.

YOU KNOW  
THOSE OLD  
BUSBY BERKELEY  
MUSICALS WHERE  
A HUNDRED  
SHOWGIRLS ARE  
ALL ON SCREEN  
DANCING AT  
ONCE?

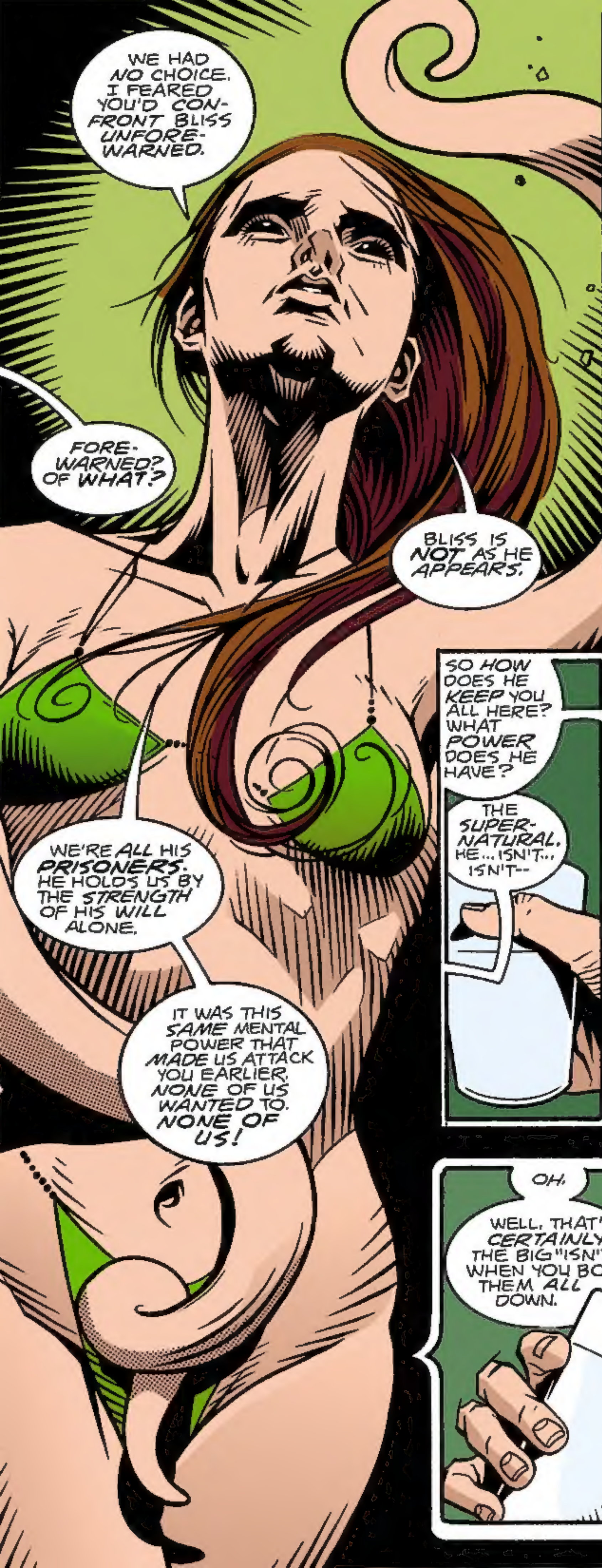
I THINK  
SO, YES.

WELL, I  
FEEL LIKE  
THE FLOOR  
THEY'RE ON.

I'M SORRY  
FOR THE RUDE  
WAY WE  
BROUGHT YOU  
HERE.

RUDE?  
CALLING ME  
A SCRAWNY DORK  
IS RUDE, THIS, I'D  
SAY, IS A LITTLE  
MORE THAN THAT.





WE HAD NO CHOICE. I FEARED YOU'D CONFRONT BLISS UNFOREWARNED.

FORE-WARNED? OF WHAT?

BLISS IS NOT AS HE APPEARS.

WE'RE ALL HIS PRISONERS. HE HOLDS US BY THE STRENGTH OF HIS WILL ALONE.

IT WAS THIS SAME MENTAL POWER THAT MADE US ATTACK YOU EARLIER. NONE OF US WANTED TO. NONE OF US!



WELL...

...CRUSHER, PERHAPS. HE'S BLISS'S MAN. HIS RIGHT HAND.

YEAH, I'LL BET HE IS. HIS LEFT HAND IS A BIT OF A WOWZER, TOO.

SO HOW DOES HE KEEP YOU ALL HERE? WHAT POWER DOES HE HAVE?

THE SUPER-NATURAL. HE... ISN'T... ISN'T--

WHAT? MAN, TALK ABOUT A PREGNANT PAUSE. HE ISN'T WHAT? PRESBYTERIAN? CIRCUMCISED? A VEGETARIAN? A JACKIE GLEASON FAN? WHAT?

BLISS ISN'T HUMAN.

MISTER KNIGHT.



OH.

WELL, THAT'S CERTAINLY THE BIG "ISN'T" WHEN YOU BOIL THEM ALL DOWN.

MISTER KNIGHT...





YEAH?

...I'M SORRY.

FOR HURTING YOU.

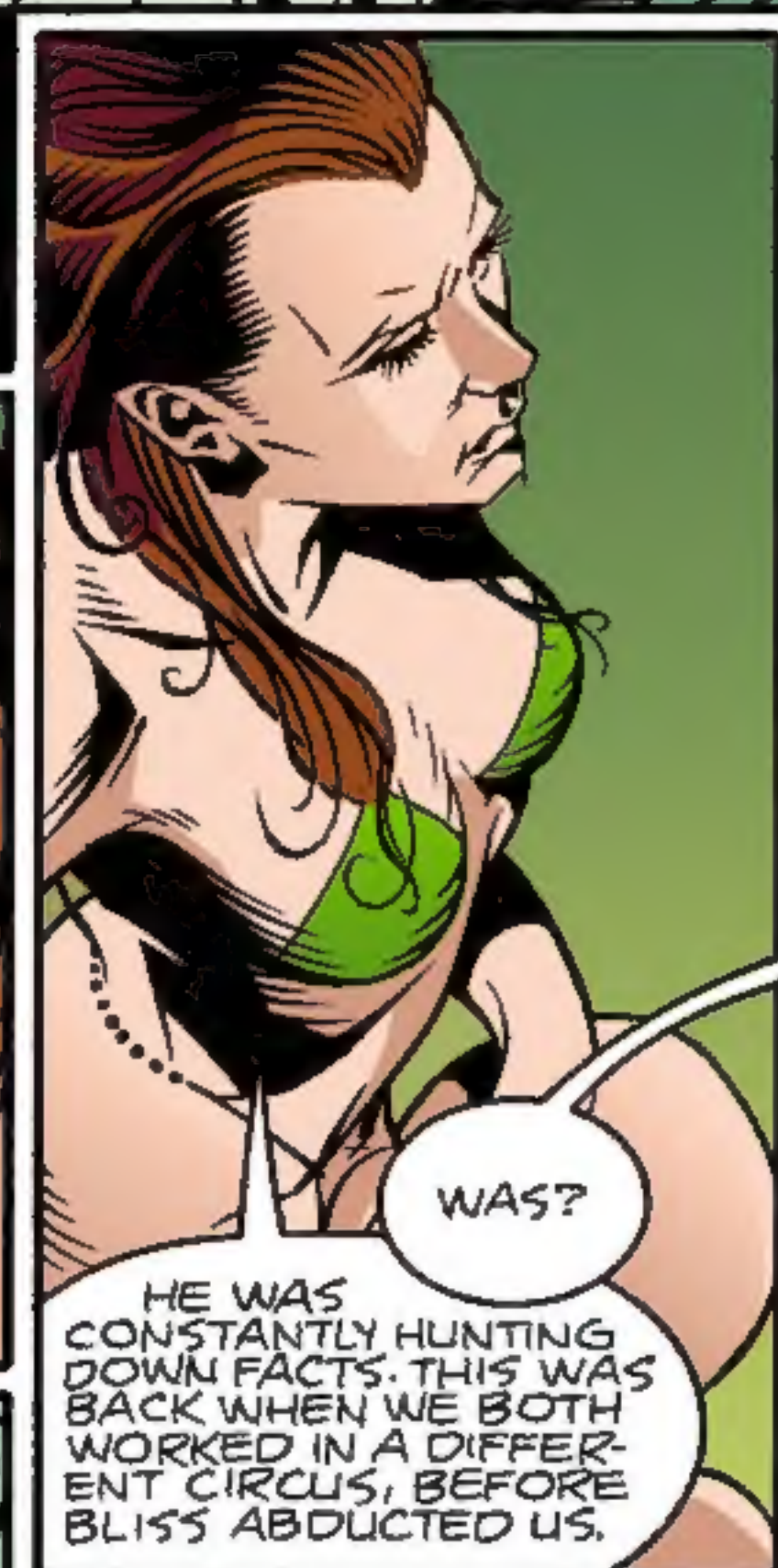
I'M A DWARF... BUT I'M NOT BAD... I'M NOT THE BAD DWARF. NO, I'M NOT, THE BAD IS SOMEWHERE ELSE.



WHAT'S HE GOING ON ABOUT?



HIS NAME'S RENÉ. HE USED TO BE A MEMORY MASTER. QUITE A SHOW HE HAD. HE WENT UNDER THE BILLING OF "THE POCKET ENCYCLOPEDIA." HE WAS THE SMARTEST MAN I'VE EVER KNOWN.



WAS?

HE WAS CONSTANTLY HUNTING DOWN FACTS. THIS WAS BACK WHEN WE BOTH WORKED IN A DIFFERENT CIRCUS, BEFORE BLISS ABDUCTED US.



ANYWAY, HE WENT TO EUROPE. A LEARNING HOLIDAY, HE CALLED IT. HE WAS FOUND WANDERING THE STREETS OF VIENNA. LIKE THIS, HIS INTELLECT GONE... THE REASONING OF A CHILD.

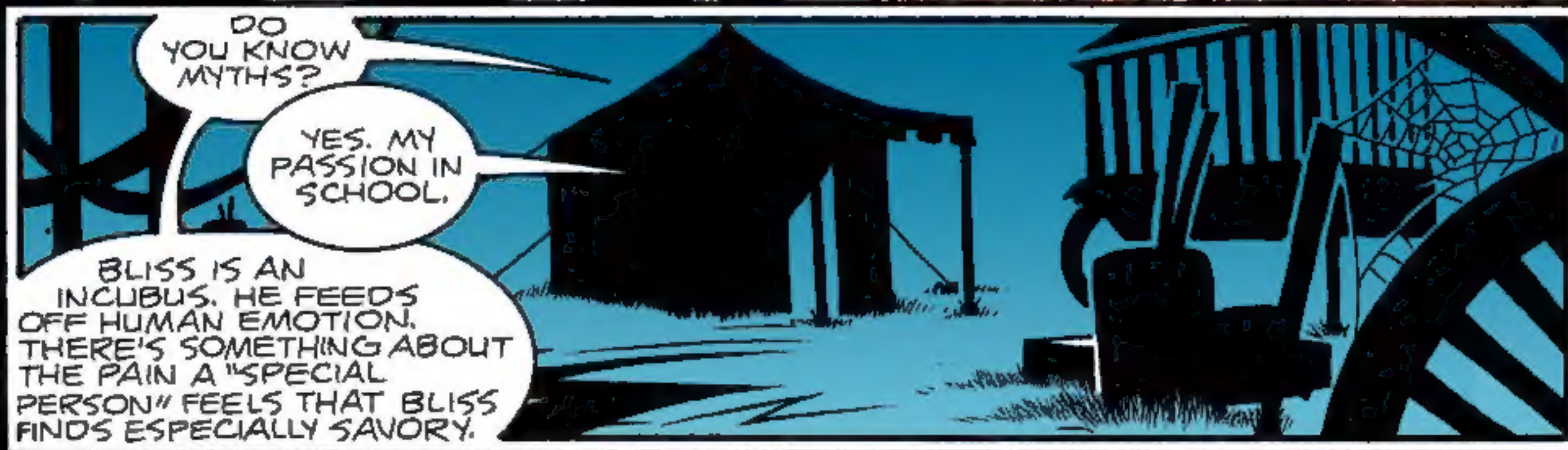
ALL HE SAID FOR THE LONGEST TIME AFTERWARDS WAS SIMPLY THAT "THE BAD DWARF" DID THIS TO HIM.



BUT THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH BLISS?

NO.

WELL, I SUPPOSE I SHOULD THANK GOD FOR SMALL MERCIES. SO WHAT IS IT ABOUT, BLISS? HIS STORY? HE'S NOT HUMAN?



DO YOU KNOW MYTHS?

YES. MY PASSION IN SCHOOL.

BLISS IS AN INCUBUS. HE FEEDS OFF HUMAN EMOTION. THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THE PAIN A "SPECIAL PERSON" FEELS THAT BLISS FINDS ESPECIALLY SAVORY.





SPECIAL PERSON?

A FREAK.

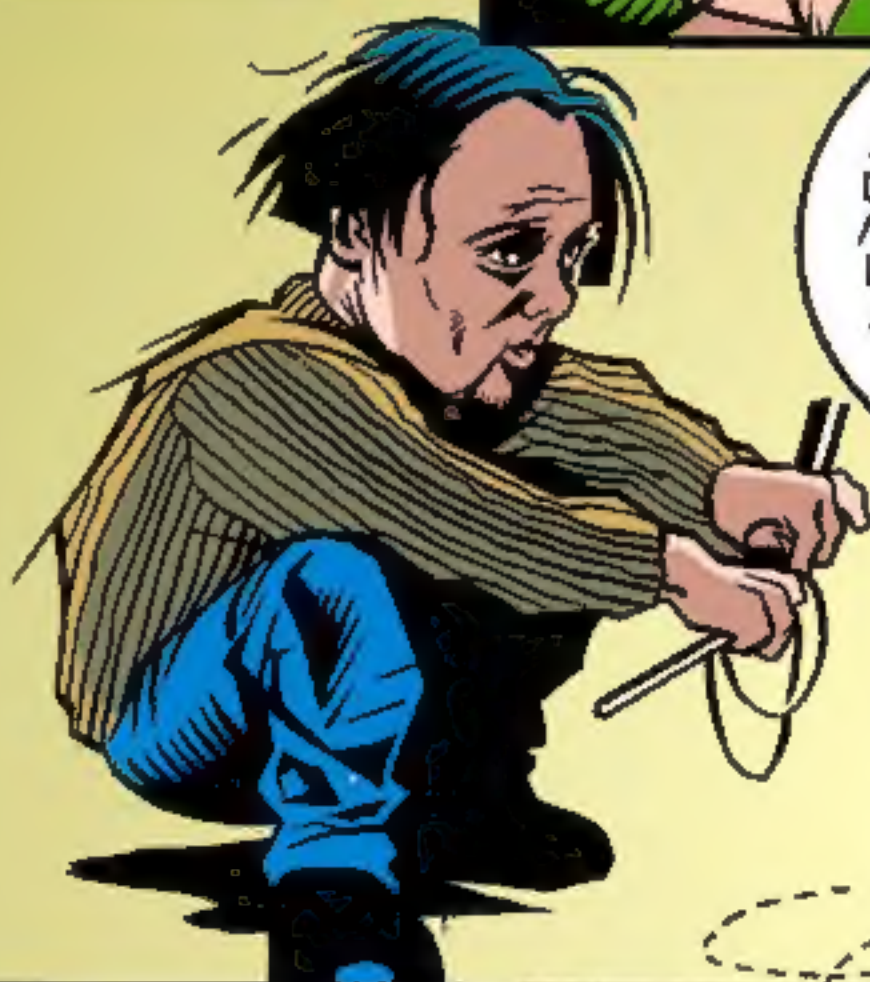
OH.

HE KEEPS US UNTIL THE ENERGY HE'S DRAINING FINALLY KILLS US. IT TAKES TIME AND IT'S A TERRIBLE, WASTING DEATH. I'VE BEEN HERE FOR FOUR YEARS, BUT THE WORD IS THAT BLISS HAS BEEN AT THIS SINCE THE '30S.



SO HE FEEDS ON OUR SORROW AND THE PER-VERSE DELIGHT PEOPLE GET FROM SEEING US.

BY FEEDING ON US, HE GETS STRONGER AND SO IS ABLE TO CONTROL US MORE SO. PREVENTING US FROM ESCAPING OR GETTING AID, OR RESISTING IN ANY WAY. AND HE GOES OUT OF HIS WAY TO ADD TO OUR DISCOMFORT.



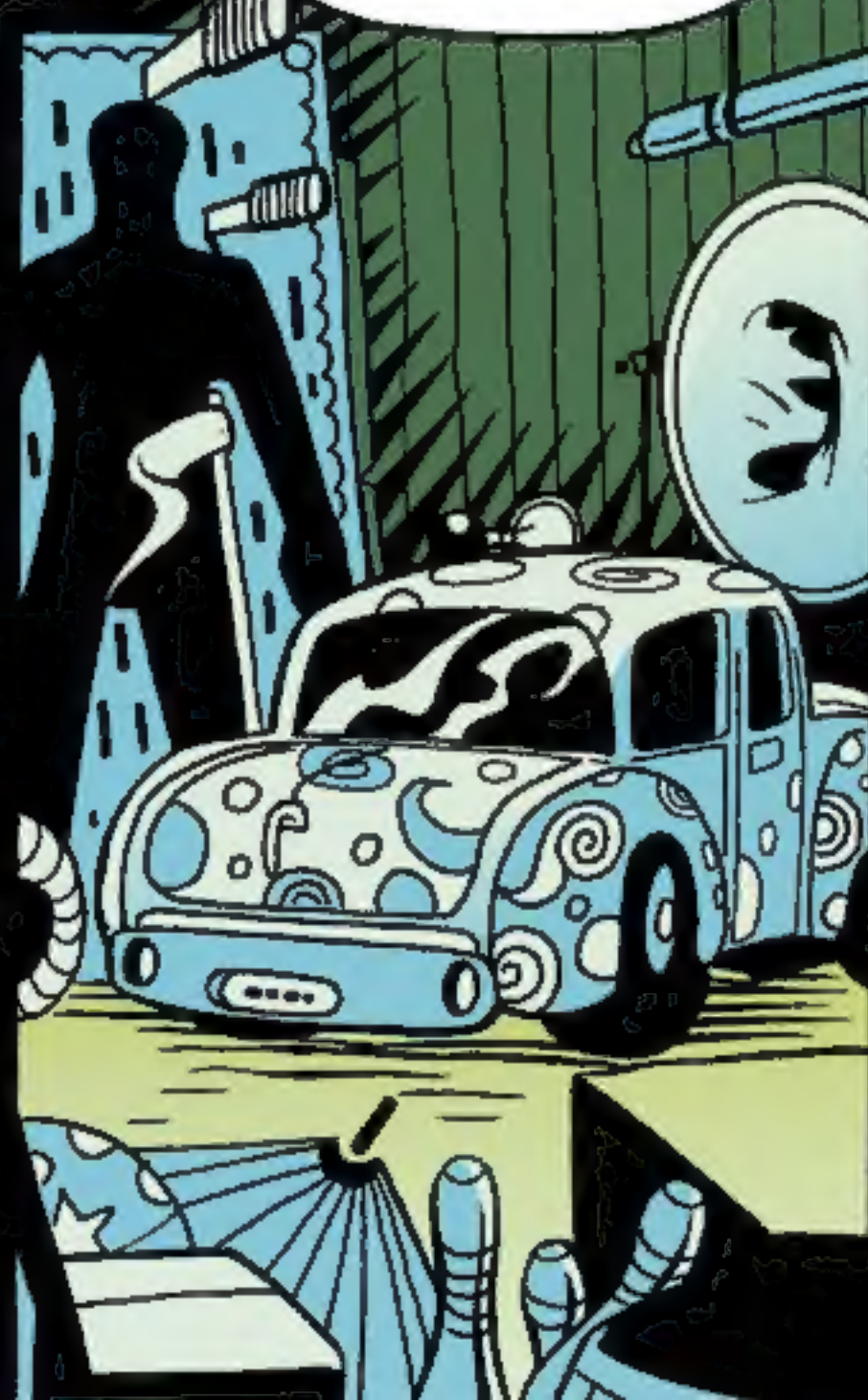
RENÉ'S JEWISH. BLISS ENJOYS MAKING HIM DRESS UP AS A NAZI. I AM BY NO MEANS FOND OF HOW I LOOK, YET BLISS HAS ME UNDRESSED LIKE A CENTERFOLD. AND WE'RE JUST TWO OF MANY.



HOW LONG HAVE THE OTHERS BEEN HERE? I SUPPOSE MICHAEL THE "BLUE ALIEN" HAS BEEN HERE LONGEST...THE LONGEST SURVIVING, I MEAN TO SAY. HE'S BEEN HERE SINCE '85.



THERE MUST BE SOMETHING TO HIS PHYSIOLOGY, TO BE SURE. MANY WHO BLISS BROUGHT HERE AFTERWARDS ARE ALREADY DEAD, YET MICHAEL LIVES ON.



AND OH, HIS PAIN MUST BE A SWEET ONE, FOR BLISS PRIZES POOR MICHAEL MORE THAN ANY OF US.





BLISS SLEEPS NOW, THAT'S HOW I WAS ABLE TO RESIST HIS POWER ENOUGH TO GRAB YOU, BUT NEVER IS HIS HOLD SO WEAK THAT I... OR ANY OF MY FRIENDS HERE... COULD ESCAPE.

SOME ARE FOREVER IN A TRANCE, MAGGIE, THE SAFFRON SNAIL, IS CLOSE TO DEATH, AND NONE OF US ARE ABLE TO... TO --

I READ MINDS, A LITTLE.

I KNEW WHO YOU WERE WHEN I SAW YOU EARLIER TODAY, I WANTED TO ASK FOR YOUR HELP, BACK WHEN YOU FIRST PASSED MY TENT, BUT THEN I WAS UNABLE TO.

I'LL BE BACK.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING? TO BLISS? I THINK YOU SHOULD GET HELP FIRST. GO NOW... WHILE YOU CAN... AND GET THE AUTHORITIES.

WHAT, AND HAVE MAGGIE THE SNAIL ON MY CONSCIENCE? NO, THANK YOU.

I'LL BE OKAY. I'VE GOT MY STAR ROD, I GOT BREATH MINTS. WHAT ELSE DO I--

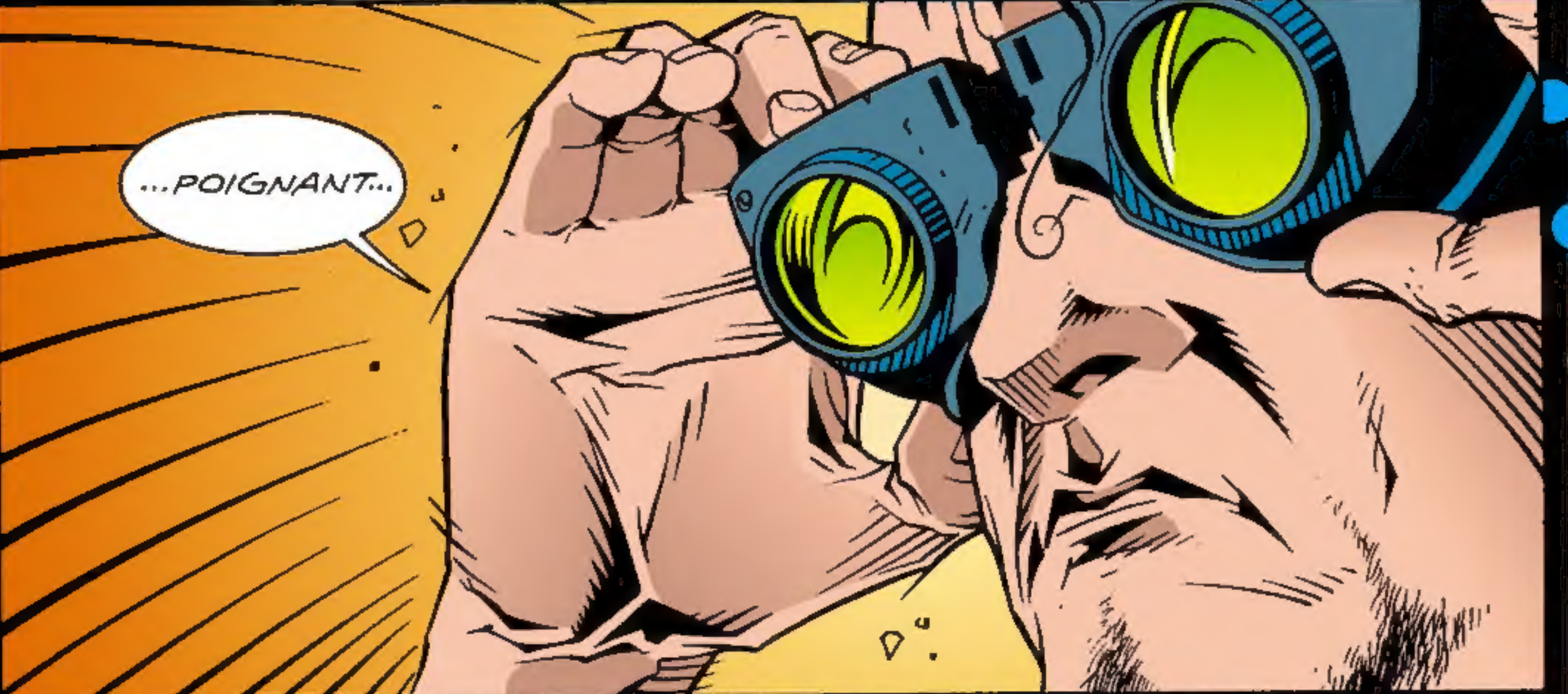






BLISS...IS  
AWAKE.

OH, IS HE?  
WELL, I'LL HAVE  
TO SEE ABOUT  
PUTTING HIM BACK  
TO SLEEP. I MAY  
NOT BE WESLEY  
DODDS, BUT I  
THINK I CAN  
HUM HIM  
QUITE A...



...POIGNANT...



...LULLABY.



INTERLUDE.

THIS NIGHT IS ONE OF NEW FRIENDS AND ENEMIES FOR JACK. INDEED.

BUT FOR ANOTHER, THIS NIGHT IS ONE OF DREAMS. OLD DREAMS. FAMILIAR AND WORN.

HIS APARTMENT IN OPAL CITY IS ONE OF THE NICEST ON NOODLE AVENUE. NICER THAN A COP'S PAY SHOULD AFFORD.

IF THE COP WAS CLEAN.

THIS POLICEMAN ISN'T. AND HIS FAMILY WOULD KILL HIM IF THEY KNEW.

MATTHEW O'DARE. A BAD COP. FILTHY. RICH FROM BRIBES AND VICE. NOR DOES HE EVER SLEEP ALONE. THERE'S ALWAYS A LADY OF THE EVENING TO BE "ARRESTED" WHO'D RATHER SPEND THE NIGHT WITH HIM THAN IN A JAIL CELL.

BUT ALONE OR NOT, AS MATTHEW SLEEPS... HE DREAMS.

OF A PAST. A TIME PAST. A MAN WHO WAS ONCE LAW IN AN OPAL CITY GONE BY. HE DREAMS OF THAT OTHER MAN'S LIFE.

MOMENTS.

MATTHEW O'DARE STIRS. HE MURMURS A NAME... BRIAN SAVAGE.

BUT DOESN'T WAKE.





INTERLUDE II



AND ON A WALL IN  
ANOTHER PART  
OF THE CITY...

... A POSTER  
COMES TO LIFE...

... AN INNO-  
CENT IS  
TAKEN.

HARRIS 95



GREAT.

I'M FIGHTING  
A DEMON.

A DEMON. A GHOUL. SOME-  
THING FROM BEYOND.

I COULD GO TO THE  
COPS. MAYBE I SHOULD.

BUT BLISS MIGHT UP HIS  
STAKES AND BE GONE  
BY THE TIME I RETURNED.  
OR IF HE KNOWS THAT  
OCTAVIA SPOKE TO ME,  
SHE COULD BE ACED.

YEAH, DAD. THANKS FOR  
TALKING ME INTO  
THIS. WHAT WOULD  
YOU DO? HUH?

I HAVE TO ASK MYSELF  
WHY I'M DOING THIS, TOO.

BECAUSE I'M DOING  
THE HERO THING, LIKE  
I AGREED WITH DAD  
THAT I WOULD?

OR SHAME? I WENT  
INTO THAT FREAK  
SHOW QUOTING TOD  
BROWNING AND  
ENJOYING THE  
SIGHTS.

DIDN'T THINK FOR A  
SECOND THAT THE  
SIGHTS HAD SOULS.

SIGH.

THERE WAS A SUPER-  
TEAM, AS I RECALL.  
I FORGET THEIR NAME  
ONE OF THEM WORE  
BANDAGES, I DO  
REMEMBER THAT. THE  
LEGEND IS THAT THEY  
DIED FOR THE SAKE  
OF FOURTEEN  
PEOPLE IN A COASTAL  
TOWN SOMEWHERE.  
FOURTEEN PEOPLE  
WERE ENOUGH TO  
DIE FOR. THEN.

MAYBE MY  
SMALL GROUP  
OF "SPECIAL  
PEOPLE" HERE  
ARE ENOUGH TO  
DIE FOR NOW.



MAYBE THA--

NO! NO WAY!  
WHAT AM I  
THINKING? I  
DON'T WANT  
TO DIE.

I SHOULD  
RUN... GET  
AWAY  
WHILE I--

WHOA, COWBOY. NO  
RUNNING. PEOPLE  
NEED YOU. WITH A  
CLEAR HEAD, THEY  
NEED YOU, TOO, SO  
CALM DOWN.

TAKE A DEEP BREATH.

WIPE THE SWEAT  
OFF YOUR UPPER  
LIP.

AND FACE  
YOUR FOE.

YEAH, THAT IS WHAT DAD WOULD  
DO. WESLEY DODDS, TOO, FOR  
THAT MATTER, I BET. WHERE-  
EVER THE OLD GUY IS NOW.

STILL, CAN'T HELP THINKING...  
I'M NOT... SOMETHING I'M  
NOT DOING RIGHT. SOME-  
THING I SHOULD BE WATCH-  
ING FOR.

BLISS!

JACK  
KNIGHT. OF  
COURSE. NOW  
I KNOW WHO  
YOU ARE.

STARMAN.

SOMETHING I  
SHOULD BE--

I HAD A  
FRIEND. A SUPER-  
VILLAIN BACK DURING  
THE WAR YEARS.  
JOHNNY SORROW  
WAS HIS NAME.  
YOUR FATHER  
FOUGHT HIM.

OH,  
YEAH

OH, YEAH.

OH, NO.

AHH,  
BUT THAT  
WAS THEN  
AND THAT  
WAS  
THEM...

I REALIZE WHAT IT  
IS...WHAT I SHOULDN'T  
BE DOING.



LETTING THE  
BAD GUY HAVE  
THE HIGH  
GROUND.

THIS  
IS  
US!

GRRR!

OHA!

A MISTAKE  
TO DIE FOR!





WHY DO I  
SUDDENLY--

GHAA

THWAT

SUDDENLY FEEL  
TIRED. I SHOULDN'T  
... SHOULD I FEEL--

CAN'T THINK  
STRAIGHT TO  
THINK STRAIGHT  
TO--

NO!

BLISS IS USING HIS  
POWERS. AN  
INCUBUS. A DEMON  
WHO FEEDS  
OFF...

...THE ENERGY  
OF OTHERS.

MY  
ENERGY.

HERE,  
YOU  
LEECH!

HERE'S  
ENERGY...

...FROM  
THE  
HEAVENS.

ZZZZT

NOT MY  
FAVORITE  
FLAVOR.

KRAH!



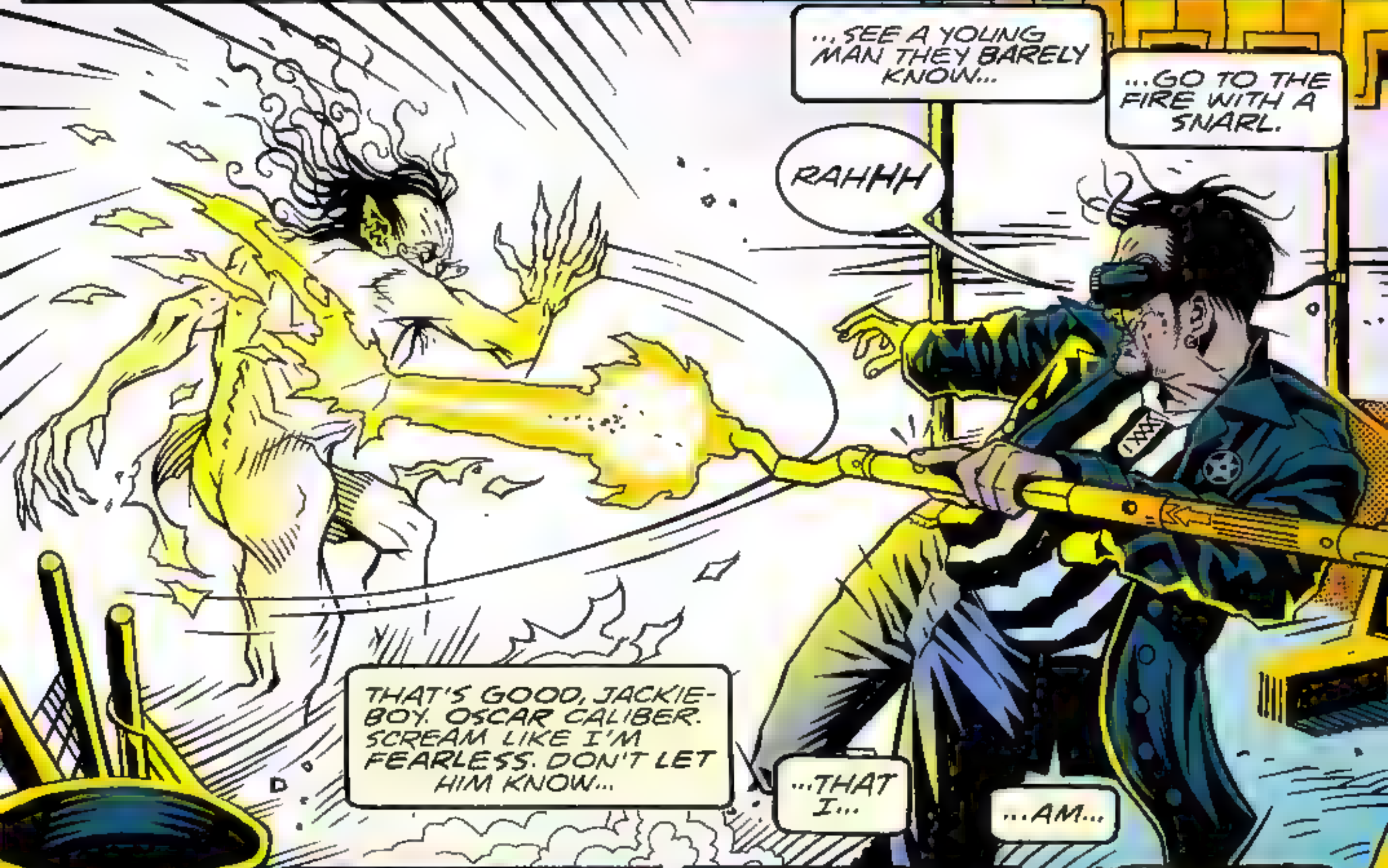


THE CIRCUS WORKERS LOOK ON, THOSE THAT STAY TO LOOK ON. OTHERS RUN. BLISS'S TENURE ALLOWED SOME OF THESE MEN TO LITERALLY GET AWAY WITH MURDER.



SENSING THIS MIGHT BE THE END, THOSE SAME NOW CONTENT THEMSELVES TO SIMPLY GET AWAY.

BUT AMONG THIS LARGER GROUP, A SMALL CLUSTER OF THEM...



...SEE A YOUNG MAN THEY BARELY KNOW...

...GO TO THE FIRE WITH A SNARL.

RAHHH

THAT'S GOOD, JACKIE-BOY. OSCAR CALIBER. SCREAM LIKE I'M FEARLESS. DON'T LET HIM KNOW...

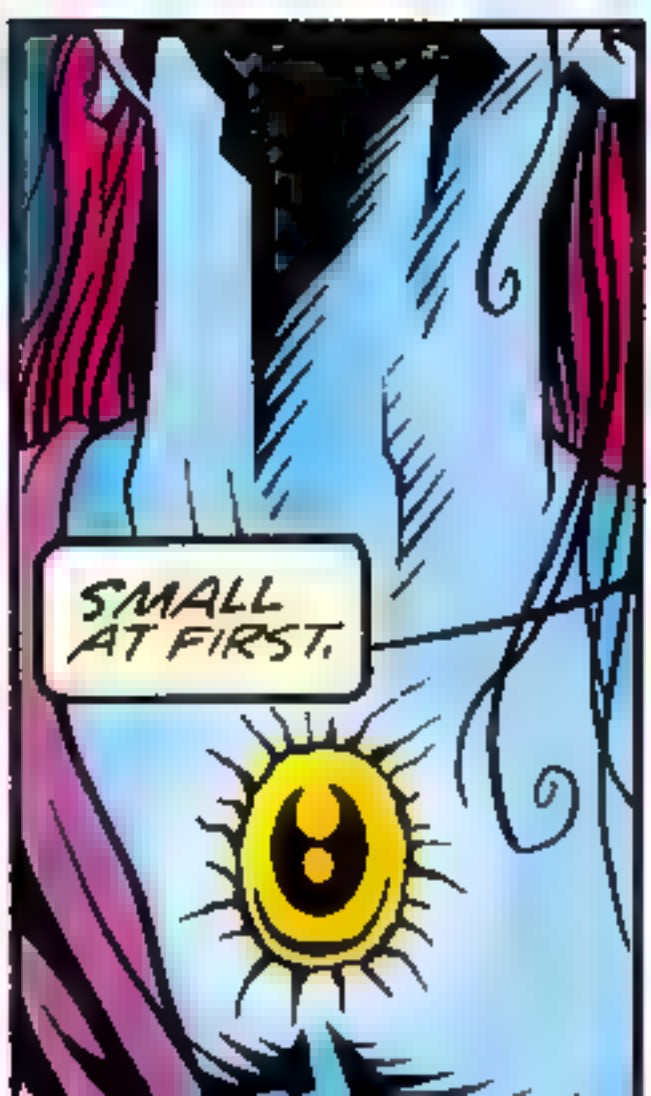
...THAT I...

...AM...

...PETRIFIED.



A FLICKER OF A FEELING BEGINS TO STIR WITHIN SOME TO SEE.



SMALL AT FIRST.



NEED A  
BREATHING.

OH!  
SH--

YEAH?  
YEAH?  
COME  
ON,  
THEN!

TO THE  
AIR. HOPE  
HE CAN'T--

FLICKERING  
SMALL.

OFF AWAY SOME  
TENT ROPES STRAIN.  
BIRDS, AWOKEN,  
CRY OUT IN  
ANGER, THE WIND  
JOINS THE  
CHORUS, EASTERLY  
AND SHARP.

A FEELING,  
GROWING.

BUT, OF COURSE...  
NO ONE CARES.

NHHH!









YOU WANT TO BEAT ME DOWN?!

LIKE THE OTHERS? YOU DRAIN THEM. DRINK THEM DRY!

THAT'S WHAT YOU DO! THAT'S WHAT YOU DO!

WELL, NOT ME, YOU WIN THIS WHEN I'M DEAD AND GONE!

NOT BEFORE.

YOU HEAR ME?

NOT BEFORE.



DEAD AND GONE?

YOUR CHOICE.

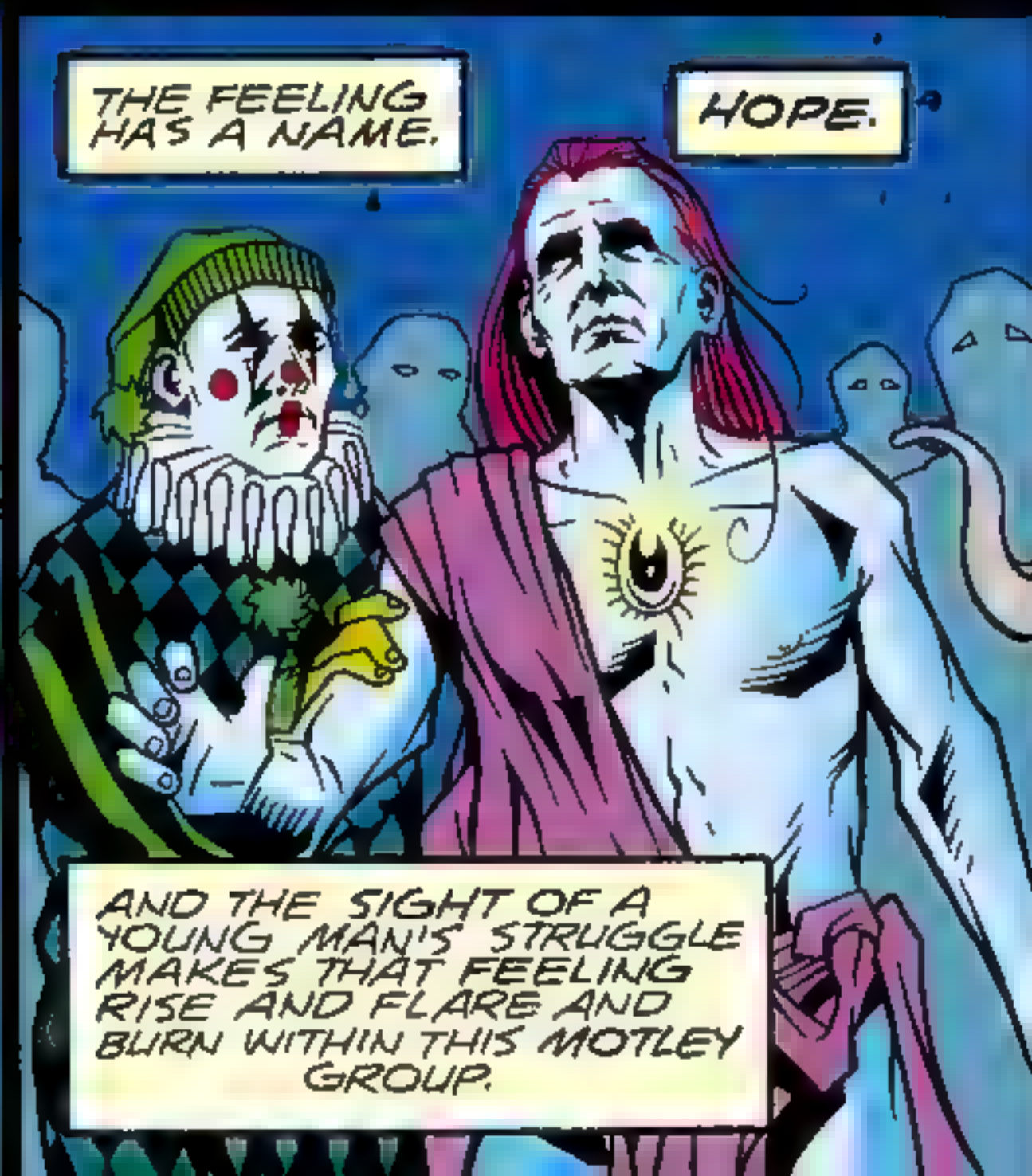
IF I DIE TONIGHT, AWAY FROM MY CITY, MY HOME, THE OPAL.

IF I DIE, THEN HE GOES, TOO. I'M NOT--

NOT DYING FOR NOTHING!

AND AS MUCH AS I'M FEARFUL, I CAN'T... WON'T... LET HIM SEE.

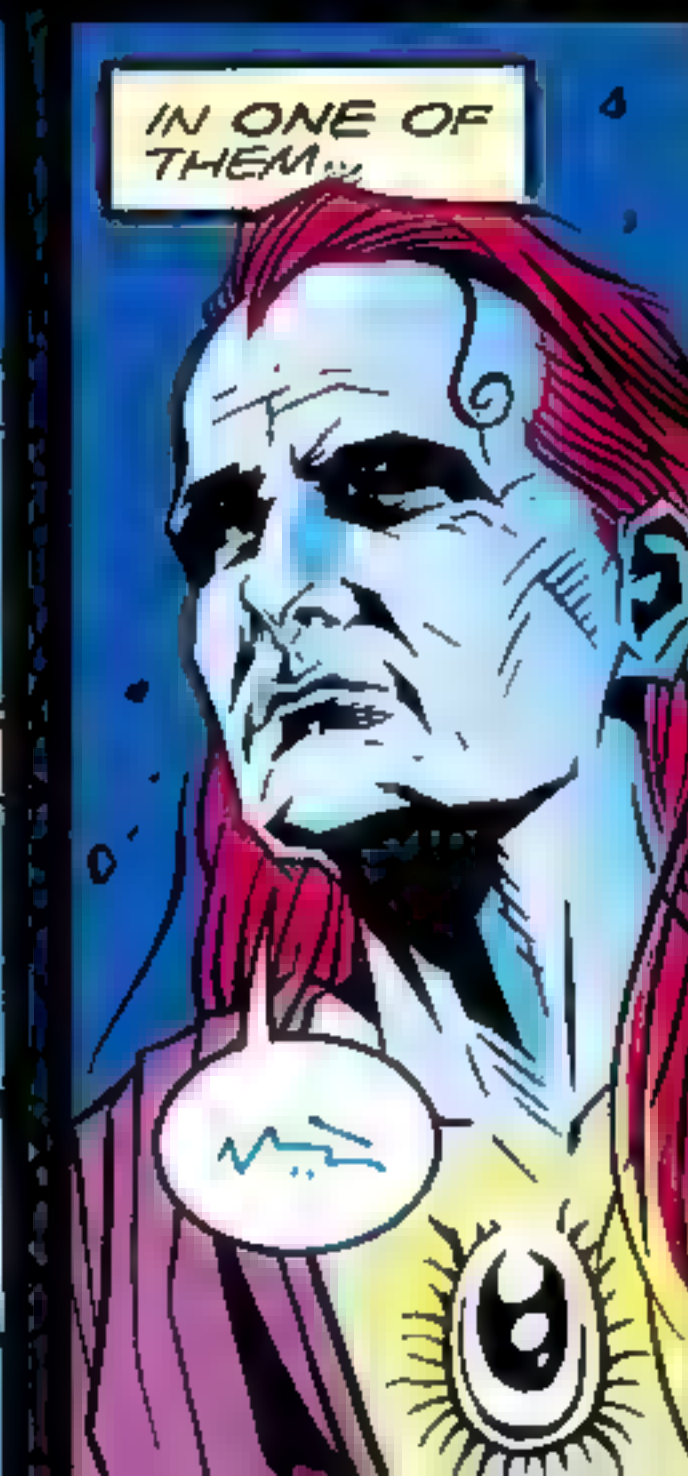
I WON'T!



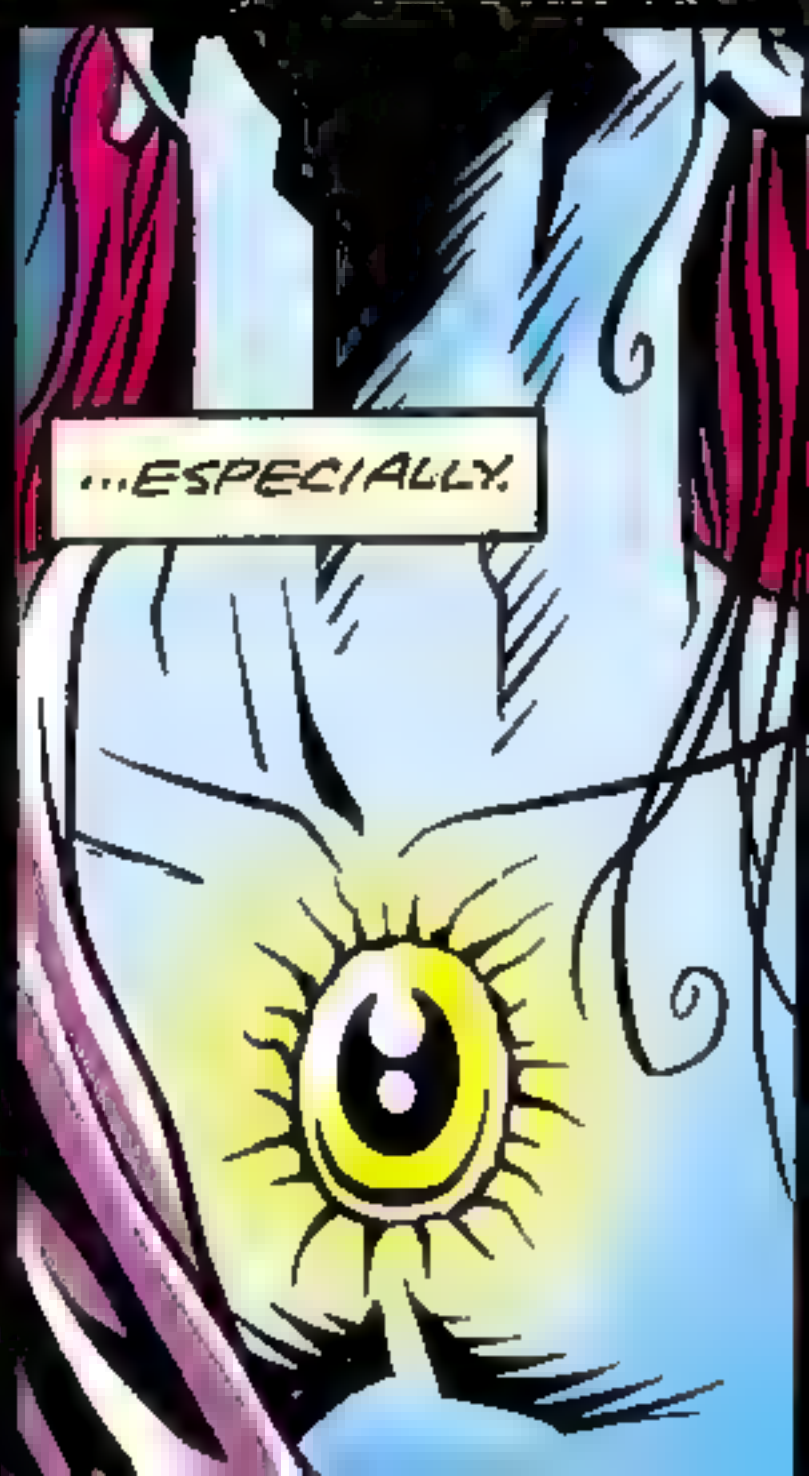
THE FEELING HAS A NAME.

HOPE.

AND THE SIGHT OF A YOUNG MAN'S STRUGGLE MAKES THAT FEELING RISE AND FLARE AND BURN WITHIN THIS MOTLEY GROUP.



IN ONE OF THEM...



...ESPECIALLY.



FOR WHOM THE SMUT  
AND HAZE OF DREAM-  
TIME THAT HAS BEEN HIS  
LIFE FOR OH SO LONG...

...NOW  
BEGINS TO  
AWAKEN.'

A LITTLE.

ENOUGH.

AW





IS IT THE POWER?  
COMBINED?

TWO HEROES.

SKRZ  
ZZZAT

IS THAT WHY BLISS  
IS SUDDENLY WEAK  
AND WET WITH FEAR?

KRAKL

SKRZ

ZZZAT

HE FEEDS  
ON PAIN.

REPLACED  
BY HOPE.

THEN JUST  
PERHAPS.

...OH, MY  
CHILDREN.  
MY  
CHILDREN...

HE DRINKS THE FINE  
WINE OF EMOTIONAL  
AGONY. THE AGONY  
OF OTHERS.

BUT IF THAT  
PAIN IS GONE.

THEIR  
PAIN.

PERHAPS.  
PERHAPS.

SO GOES  
HIS POWER.

O...  
O...O...  
OH...





...WHY  
HAST THOU  
FORSAKEN  
ME?

KRAK!

KRA

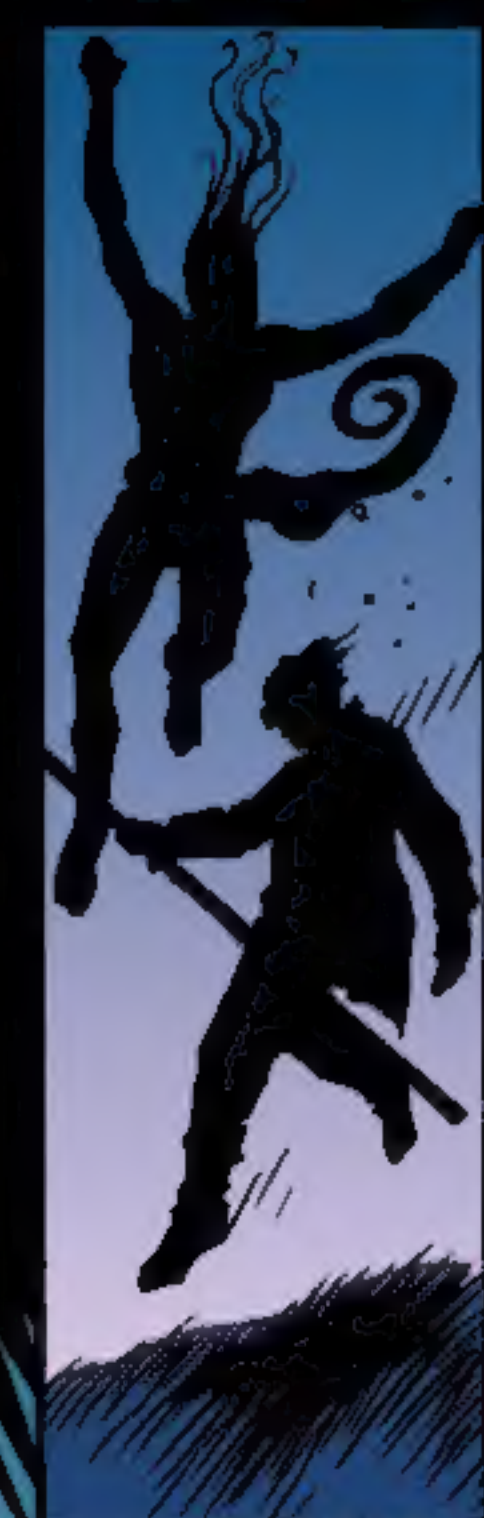
KRAK!

COOL.

BUT WHAT A  
DRAMA QUEEN.

THOUGHT HE'D  
NEVER GO.







# ...WE'RE FREE!

I HAVE TO BE  
HARD ABOUT THIS.

I'LL DEMAND CIRCUS  
PROPS AND POSTERS  
IN RETURN FOR  
THEIR FREEDOM.

YEAH.

IF I JUST RIDE OFF, MY GOOD  
DEED DONE LIKE AN OLD-TIME  
WESTERN HERO...

...THEN WHERE IS THAT  
GOING TO GET ME?

I MIGHT BECOME...IF I'M  
NOT CAREFUL, I MIGHT  
BECOME...

...EVERYTHING DAD  
WANTS ME TO BE.

HERO FOR  
HERO'S SAKE.

I CAN'T LET THAT  
HAPPEN. GOTTA  
BE HARD ABOUT...

...ABOUT--

BUT, MAN, THAT  
FEELING... HAVING  
DONE THE RIGHT  
THING AND SUR-  
VIVED THE DOING  
OF IT...

...IT SURE FEELS GOOD.

THE END



# Deadman Wade

"THIS IS WHAT  
AWESOME  
LOOKS LIKE".

DCP